

~What Would Clara Barton Bring?~

"People call me a nurse – I scarcely know why. There were no nurses then. Trained nurses were not known. My work was, and chiefly has been to get timely supplies to those needing. It has taught me the value of Things. They have lost all. They want food, clothing, shelter, medicines, and a few calm practical persons to administer them. This seems to have been my work."
(Clara Barton excerpt from interview published in New York Sun, January 10, 1908.)



During the **Civil War** Clara Barton collected and distributed supplies in hospitals and on the battlefield for both sides. She wanted to give comfort and relief to those men who were fighting for their country. Clara Barton began to collect supplies such as food, bedding, clothes, bandages, toiletry articles, and personal items. All of these things were dispersed by wagon or rail car to the hospitals or battlefields. Clara Barton would also go along to provide whatever assistance that she could. You can find some of these very same items in your home to show your classmates.

In 1881 Clara Barton founded the **American Red Cross**. This organization assisted victims of war and natural or manmade disasters. Although Clara Barton did store many of her supplies in warehouses, she also stored some in her own home for quick access. Her house was full of Red Cross supplies kept in concealed closets. Miss Barton dispersed these supplies by wagon or rail, often providing her personal assistance as well.

Civil War Supply Shopping List:

1861-1865

1. bread
2. pies
3. canned fruits
4. pickled vegetables
5. jelly
6. prepared soups
7. meal
8. bandages
9. salves
10. combs
11. thread
12. buttons
13. thimbles
14. string
15. sewing kits
16. soap
17. clean shirts
18. handkerchiefs
19. sheets
20. blankets
21. oil and candle lanterns

Red Cross Supply Shopping List:

1881-1904

1. clothing
2. tools (plows, hammers, nails)
3. bedding
4. blankets
5. thread
6. salt
7. meal
8. bread
9. flour
10. canned meats and fruits
11. Horlicks malted milk
12. seeds (vegetable and fruit)
13. bandages
14. lumber
15. tin utensils
16. soap
17. oil and candle lanterns
18. fodder (feed for livestock)
19. shoes
20. coal



A Red Cross supply warehouse built at the site of the Johnstown flood.



Clara Barton looks on as a Red Cross nurse bandages a man's wrist.

Get your class involved!

Make your own bandages:

Although Clara Barton was not a trained nurse, she did provide first aid care to those in need. One of the supplies needed most frequently were bandages. Bandages of the day were made of plain cotton muslin cut into strips and wrapped around the wound. You can make your own bandages for your classmates as well.

1. Go to a local fabric store and buy a small amount (1-2 yards) of unbleached white cotton muslin.
2. Cut the muslin into strips about 2 inches wide and 20 inches long.
3. At one end of the strip, cut about eight inches of the material in half so that two tails are hanging down.
4. Wrap the strip around the wrist so that the two ties hanging down can be tied together to secure the bandage.



Additional information on Clara Barton's life and accomplishments as well as a photo gallery are available on-line at www.nps.gov/clba. Clara Barton National Historic Site, 5801 Oxford Road, Glen Echo, Maryland 20812. 301-320-1410. Images, Clara Barton NHS Collection. Handout developed by Clara Barton NHS Volunteer Allison Dixon. Clara Barton NHS is administered by the George Washington Memorial Parkway.